

“Let Freedom Ring”

Adapted by: Michael Hughes

Text: John 8:31-36

Theme: To stress the freedom that we have in Jesus Christ.

Introduction:

1. “My country, tis of thee, Sweet land of liberty,
Of thee I sing.
Land where my fathers died! Land of the
pilgrim’s pride! From every mountain side,
Let freedom ring.”
2. Two hundred plus years of freedom- what has it done to us? Or what have we done to it? Our Constitution and Bill of Rights are truly great documents, guaranteeing that “we the people” have certain inalienable rights.
 - a. Many feel that our freedoms are rapidly being lost, not from forces from without, but from gross abuse and neglect from within.
 - b. But, “the price of freedom is (still) eternal vigilance.”
3. Note some of the basic freedoms we still have that Christians can cherish.

Discussion:

- I. Freedom from fear -
 - A. Most of us have nothing to fear but fear itself.
 - B. No real threat at the moment of foreign invasion.
 - C. Regarding personal rights -
 1. Right to own and possess personal property.

2. But fear is creeping in - locks, burglar alarms, community committees, guns- not enough policemen to go around, etc., etc.
- D. What happened to our guarantee?
1. Piece of paper only as good as those standing behind it!
 2. Bill of Rights is a human document, administered by humans.
 3. The “perfect law of liberty” is a divine document.
 - a. But administered by humans.
 - b. If we put too much emphasis upon protection from human sources alone, we are doomed to a life of fear!
 - c. Psalms 133:4.
- II. Freedom from want -
- A. A limit to how much any government can provide.
 - B. Government cannot fill void of loneliness or personal neglect.
 - C. Christian people are to be mindful of the needs of others.
 1. Galatians 6:2,9,10; Acts 20:35.
 2. Matthew 23:33; Philippians 2:13.
 3. Christian brethren have consistently through the years shown an enormous generosity.
- III. Freedom of speech -
- A. We may generally say what we want to.
 - B. Up until about thirty years ago, speakers were generally respected and were respectful.
 1. Now hissers and hecklers and often “bad” speakers.
 2. ABUSE!
 - C. Christians haven’t always had this freedom.
 1. Acts 4:20; 5:20-29.
 2. Let’s keep on using this freedom properly.
 3. Even today, there is increasing pressure within society to silence Christians.
 - a. Society presently embraces those desiring to come “out of the closet.”
 - b. At the same time, Christians are being pushed into the closet.

- IV. Freedom of assembly -
 - A. Assemble just about when and where we please - unless someone else was there first.
 - B. Churches and schools still under the protection of the law.
 - C. Perhaps the greatest abuse of this freedom now is the NEGLECT! (Poor turn out for PTA, to vote, community projects, etc. etc.)
 - D. Almost impossible to get the “whole church” together at one time.
- V. Freedom of religion -
 - A. Government encroachment into private school...tax exemption.
 - B. Freedom not to be religious!
 - C. Early settlers came here to be free - but Puritans sought to force their religious views upon the entire community.
 - D. Abuse- tax exemption for businesses controlled by religious org., yet in competition with private enterprise...(apt. complexes, even breweries!).....inequity.
 - E. How thankful we need to be for the religious freedom in America.

Conclusion:

- 1. The only real lasting freedom is in Jesus. Galatians 5:1
- 2. Free from the fear of death, from the penalty of sin, free to express our praise to him who has made it all possible.
- 3. First have to get self off the throne and Christ on it (personal life).
- 4. Would you be free?

Invitation:

Bibliography:

From a sermon originally by Bruce Jackson